



What is Area-wide Pest Management for Wheat?

Overview

Area-wide Pest Management for Wheat is a five-year project to demonstrate pest management practices for the Russian wheat aphid and greenbug. The project is one of several area-wide projects developed by the USDA Agricultural Research Service. The purpose of each project is to develop coordinated efforts to control pests that occur over large geographical areas of the United States.

The program is ideal for wheat because aphids occur over large areas of the Great Plains and are expensive to control with insecticides alone. Through visits to demonstration farms, we will demonstrate the effectiveness of various pest management strategies. We will obtain grower input regarding the feasibility of pest management strategies through focus group meetings and personal interviews.

Our project team includes specialists from the ARS laboratory in Stillwater, Okla., and research and extension specialists from these five land-grant universities: Colorado State University, Kansas State University,



Weather station at one of the demonstration fields in Oklahoma.

University of Nebraska, Oklahoma State University, and Texas A&M University.

Goals of our newsletter

The main goal of our newsletter is to promote communication among those involved and to help inform those who may want to become involved.

The quarterly newsletter will provide updates about various participants, growers, and information about upcoming events such as meetings, focus groups and demonstration site visits. We encourage participants to submit information like periodic updates, pictures or information that would be useful to everybody.

We are also redesigning the web site. By visiting the website, you can access more information about the project, join our listserv, and find contact information for project participants. Visit our website,

<http://www.pswcrl.ars.usda.gov>.

Also write or call Dr. David Porter or Dr. Norm Elliott at: 1301 N. Western, Stillwater, Okla., 74075. Phone: 405-624-4141, ext. 227, for more information.

Key aspects of the project will be:

- ▶ Education and information-sharing opportunities for growers
- ▶ Monitoring insects, weeds and plant diseases in a series of paired demonstration fields over a four-year period
- ▶ Demonstrating the cost-effectiveness of aphid and other pest control in a variety of wheat production areas and systems

See page two for details



What will AWPM for Wheat do?

Monitor demonstration fields

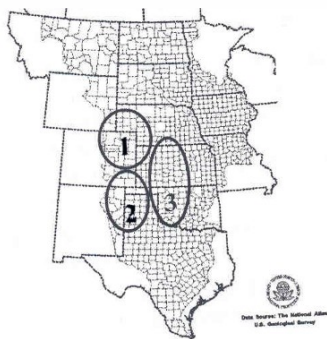
Our team began by identifying pairs of demonstration fields in three wheat production zones of the Great Plains (a total of 22 fields). Each pair consists of one wheat-fallow or continuous wheat field and one rotational-crop field.

At each demonstration field, our team will closely monitor insect populations over the next four years. We will also collect information on agronomic conditions and weather to assess how aphid numbers vary within particular areas of a field and over time.

Pairs of demonstration fields in zone 1 are located in Laramie County, Wyoming, Banner and Scottsbluff Counties, Nebraska, and Weld County, Colorado. In zone 2, we have demonstration fields in Baca and Prowers counties in southeastern Colorado, and five counties of the Texas Panhandle, (Moore, Hutchinson, Ochiltree, Deaf Smith, and Swisher Counties). In zone 3, we have one pair of demonstration sites in Reno County, Kansas, and a pair in each of these three Oklahoma counties: Alfalfa, Kay and Jackson.

Ask growers to participate

In addition to the 22 growers who farm these 11 paired demonstration fields, we would like to identify an additional 16-20 growers in and around each county where we have demonstration farms. For comparability to demonstration farms, we want to identify roughly equal numbers of growers who farm



We have pairs of demonstration fields distributed over three regions of the Great Plains where we will monitor aphids and pest control effectiveness.

either wheat only or wheat with one or more rotational crops.

Growers will participate over a four-year period, starting in the fall 2002 and ending in the summer 2006. During this period, we will ask growers to attend two focus groups and to participate in four crop production interviews. The project will compensate growers for their time and travel expenses.

We will also encourage growers to attend site visits at demonstration fields. The site visits will be a valuable time to meet other growers and to provide valuable feedback and suggestions to members of our project team.

While participation is voluntary in all aspects of the project, we hope growers will choose to participate all the way through the four-year project. Grower participation is essential if we are to implement an effective management plan for wheat. We hope growers will value the AWPM project and will share their knowledge and experience with others beyond the four years of the project.

How growers will participate:

► We will invite growers to attend two focus groups and to participate in four crop production interviews.

► All information obtained from growers is confidential.

► While participation is voluntary in all aspects of the project, we hope growers will choose to participate all the way through the four-year project.

► We will also encourage growers to attend site visits at demonstration farms

In our next issue: Learn more about focus groups and our rural sociologist.